

Administrative Capacities Supporting the Public Health Standards

Performance, accountability, results, and quality improvement are themes of the Standards for Public Health in Washington State. While the Standards are an overarching performance measurement framework for services, programs, legislation and state and local administrative codes that affect public health, the Administrative Capacities -- those systems and processes that must be in place to achieve the Standards -- are prerequisites for improving performance and meeting expectations.

Some of the Capacities were first noted in 1994 and 1996 Public Health Improvement Plans. More Capacities were highlighted as Standards were developed and as a result of the baseline evaluation. And, some of the Capacities are pointed to in the Key Management Practices which are aspects of public health work that are common across many areas of public health practice.

What does it take to manage and govern my agency? How do I acquire and account for the equipment I need to do my work? How do I go about and what is involved in hiring staff? What systems are in place to help me manage my budget? Questions such as these emphasize the need for the Capacities.

The four Administrative Capacities areas are: Finances and Management, Human Resources, Leadership and Governance, and Information Systems. Strong systems and processes in these areas support higher Standards performance and create operational efficiencies.

An example of the relationship of Standards, Capacities, and Key Management Practices follows:

One Assessment Standard calls for collection, analysis and dissemination of information about environmental health threats and community health status. The corresponding Information Systems Capacity to support these activities requires reliable and secure data systems that give timely access to the data and are supported by trained staff. The Key Management Practice for the same standard calls for a core set of health status indicators for continuous monitoring of threats and health status.

Like the Standards, the Capacities will need to be tested and then used to measure performance. As the process moves forward best practices and opportunities for improvement will emerge. Also, like the Standards, administrative systems and process improvements should be considered ways to “raise the bar,” rather than a floor or ceiling issue.

The Capacities can be used in two ways. Some agencies can use them as “stand alone” measures. They will also be used with the Standards to fully show performance of the public health system.

Administrative Capacities

Supporting the Public Health Standards

	Measure	Examples of Documentation
Effective financial and management systems are in place in all public health agencies		
Accounting Systems	<p>The accounting system identifies expenditures by funding source. System uses standard accounting principles and practices.</p> <p>The accounting reporting system provides timely financial management information.</p>	<p>BARS Report that reconciles expenditures with revenues</p> <p>Monthly reports from accounting system</p>
Budget Systems	<p>The budget is aligned with the agency strategic plan and reflects agency goals</p> <p>The budget is monitored regularly.</p>	<p>Strategic Plan</p> <p>Budget reports are provided and used by agency</p> <p>Priority setting documents are reviewed in a public and/or constituent process</p> <p>Governing body minutes show that the budget was adopted</p>
Financial management	<p>Internal controls are written and followed for :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial management Compliance with standard accounting principles Grants, contracts and procurement <p>Audit recommendations and findings are promptly addressed.</p> <p>Guidelines and policies exist regarding maximizing revenue.</p>	<p>Written policies that document procedures</p> <p>Written audit action plan</p> <p>Written reports that show disposition and progress for audit recommendations and findings</p> <p>Up-to-date policies for developing fees, collecting revenue, and sliding fee schedule</p>

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Effective financial and management systems are in place in all public health agencies		
Facilities	<p>Facilities are appropriate for effective and efficient provision of public health services.</p> <p>Facilities and systems are compliant to ADA, HIPAA and other state and federal local regulations (ADA, HIPAA, WISHA)</p>	<p>Agency plans, policies, and procedures for such things as, but not limited to collocation/adjacencies, storage, confidential work spaces and work flow</p> <p>ADA and HIPAA compliance policies and other documents.</p> <p>Recent site reviews and plan for improvement.</p>
Contract Management	<p>Develop consistency in reporting requirements for local health contractors.</p> <p>Monitoring system is in place for contractor reports and Statement of Work results.</p> <p>Consistent procedures followed for solicitation of contractors.</p> <p>Contracts meet legal review and requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Con Con Document</u> • Procedures for Request for Proposals • Procedures for and evidence of review of contract documents, including, but not limited to subcontract requirements, legally signed with specified time lines, within legal authority to perform, etc. • Survey of vendors to improve processes

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	Measure	Examples of Documentation
Human Resource systems and services support the public health workforce.		
Personnel Policies	<p>Written up-to-date personnel rules and/or labor contracts are available to all staff.</p> <p>Written job descriptions and/or classification descriptions for all positions are available to all staff.</p> <p>The salary decision-making process for the agency is documented.</p> <p>The agency has systems in place to assure that personnel laws and regulations are carried out with consistency.</p> <p>Workplace policies valuing diversity are in place.</p>	<p>Published personnel policies.</p> <p>Written job descriptions.</p> <p>Policies of the decision-making body are documented.</p> <p>Employee feedback results are elicited and used.</p> <p>Minutes of meetings showing agency review of personnel practices.</p>
Performance Management	<p>For individual employees, a system that recognizes strengths and addresses deficiencies and includes a development plan is in place.</p> <p>A workforce development plan has been developed for the agency.</p> <p>Employees have adequate supervision</p>	<p>Format for employee performance review.</p> <p>Workforce development plan.</p> <p>Supervisory responsibilities are documented in job descriptions or position descriptions.</p>
Recruitment and Retention	<p>Process for recruitment is in place and documented.</p> <p>A succession and/or replacement plan exists.</p> <p>A plan is in place that shows the agency values diversity and cultural competence is in place.</p>	<p>No position for which the agency is recruiting is left vacant for longer than 6 months.</p> <p>A succession/replacement plan is developed and used.</p> <p>Workforce and client diversity is analyzed on a regular basis and an action plan is developed that values diversity and addresses cultural competence</p>

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	Measure	Examples of Documentation
Human Resource systems and services support the public health workforce.		
Labor Relations Parking Lot	To be developed.	

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	Measure	Examples of Documentation
Information Systems support the public health mission.		
Manual and automated Information Systems (hardware, software, connection arrangements, communications)	<p>Primary information systems and redundant systems are available, reliable, appropriate, secure and supported.</p> <p>System includes e-mail and internet ties</p> <p>Strategies for use of future technologies are part of the agency IS plan.</p>	<p>Information systems items lists are prepared and inventories are regularly reviewed.</p> <p>Written system documentation is available.</p> <p>A System backup plan is prepared and used.</p> <p>A disaster recovery plan is prepared.</p> <p>IS plan is prepared.</p>
Training and support	<p>Information Technology staff are available to develop, operate, and maintain data systems and to keep these systems secure.</p> <p>Staff (or the agency as a whole?) will provide timely access to and distribution of data to internal and external audiences.</p>	<p>Organization chart showing staff support.</p>
IS Policies and Procedures	<p>Information technology policies and procedures are written and address security, redundancy, and appropriate use and are monitored for compliance.</p>	<p>Written policies and procedures are in place.</p>

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Leadership and Governance bodies set agency policies and direction		
Public Relations and Communications	<p>Public communication includes increasing the public understanding of the mission of public health and the role of public health services.</p> <p>Public relations efforts include risk communication principles.</p> <p>Customer service goals are established.</p> <p>Appropriate intergovernmental and community relations exist (e.g. other governmental bodies, schools, hospitals, and others)</p> <p>Guidelines are written regarding outside/media communications and a media contact is established.</p> <p>Guidelines are written regarding internal communication.</p> <p>There are procedures for communication with decision-making bodies and elected officials.</p>	<p>Communications protocols and procedures.</p> <p>Risk communication training documented.</p> <p>Policies to respond to citizen calls, emails, letters, and the public.</p> <p>Intergovernmental agreements (where appropriate).</p> <p>Communication protocols and/or policies for communicating with: Local and State Boards of Health Local elected officials State Legislature Congress</p>
Organization Planning and Development	<p>A plan is developed that includes: Purpose and Goals Division and program plans. Key activities and initiatives Community involvement</p>	<p>Vision and mission statements Organization charts Written program plans Agency plan</p>

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Leadership and Governance bodies set agency policies and direction		
Risk Management	The Agency has established written guidelines and programs for effective management of risk and includes obtaining appropriate insurance coverage.	Guidelines include workplace safety, ergonomics, facilities, avoiding workplace violence, communication devices, safety plan, policy for providing staff phone numbers, calling 911.
Legal Authority and Responsibility	<p>Appropriate documents exist which implement the laws and transfer authority and responsibility as needed for operations.</p> <p>The public health staff operates under its legal authority and responsibility.</p> <p>Policies, local ordinances and administrative codes are accessible to the public.</p> <p>Legal counsel is available.</p>	<p>Agency staff implement, enforce, monitor, evaluate, and report on laws and regulations.</p> <p>Policies regarding regulatory authority are written and processes are documented.</p> <p>Public notices are documented.</p>
Quality Improvement	<p>Quality Improvement plan</p> <p>Quality improvement strategies are used.</p>	<p>Plan developed.</p> <p>Results are monitored.</p> <p>Quality improvement training is documented.</p>

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Leadership and Governance bodies set agency policies and direction		
Policies and Rules	<p>Agency policies and procedures are written and followed.</p> <p>Agency policy development processes involve public engagement and involvement.</p>	Document public process including public comment.

